PRASAD): (a) to (e) The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has informed that the film 'SIKKIM' was refused certification in the 1970s. Records of that period pertaining to this film are not available with this Ministry.

Tariff for cable channels

†1586. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to decide the tariff for cable channels, if so, the steps taken in this regard;

(b) whether the task force has submitted its report to Government and if so, the main recommendations thereof;

(c) the incident of the cable TV industry which lead Government to start CAS; and

(d) whether it is in public interest and the basis thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Government has specified Rs. 72/- (Plus taxes) as the maximum price of basic service tier, consisting of not less than 30 free-to-air channels of different genres of entertainment, news, sports, children's programmes and music. Additional free-to-air channels would also be available to subscribers within the maximum amount mentioned. However, decision on tariff of pay channels does not come within the provisions of Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.

(b) Yes, Sir. The recommendations of the Task Force *inter-alia* included the need to specify the maximum price of basic service tier, consisting of not less than 30 free to air channels of different genres of entertainment, news, sports, children's programme and music in Hindi, English or the regional language, subject to availability in the area.

(c) and (d) With a view to regulating the arbitrary hike in subscription rates charged by the Cable Operators from subscribers,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

ensuring transparency in the figures of viewership, the revenue collection and providing choice to the consumers, Government has introduced CAS. Implementation of CAS is in public interest for the following reasons:—

(i) Government has specified Rs. 72/- (Plus taxes) as the maximum price of basic service tier, consisting of not less than 30 free-to-air channels of different genres of entertainment, news, sports, children's programmes and music. Additional free-to-air channels would also be available to subscribers within the maximum amount mentioned.

(ii) Consumers will have the choice to pay for only those pay channels which they choose to watch.

(iii) Will have control over the content, they wish to view.

(iv) It has been made obligatory for cable operators to make provisions for rent, security deposit, repair and maintenance of Set Top Boxes (STB).

(v) Some MSOs/Cable Operators have come out with consumer friendly schemes through which the STBs will be made available to consumers.

(vi) Government has reduced the duty on import of STB and its components to make the STB more affordable.

Set Top Boxes

1587. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Set Top Boxes have paved the way for telecom giants to launch distribution of television signals through their network;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the names of such companies;

(c) whether the existing licensing framework for telecom companies allows them to offer voice, data and video from the same